535 Dance," which is an adaptation of a traditional festival stunt performed in North China during the lunar New Year season.[27] Another dance, "Tea and Butterflies," has also been widely publicized; it is concerned with tea-gathering maidens in Western Fukien.[28] The purpose of these dances is "to beautify the working spirit" and to set a pattern to be developed by dance corps elsewhere in China.

The Central Experimental Opera Institute at Peking has also given instruction in ballet, and there are many aspiring ballerinas. Interest in ballet is unprecedented in China and is clearly the result of the popularity of ballet in Russia.[29]

The activities associated with dance are organized and directed by the government. There is the All-China Association of Dancers, a subdivision of the All-China Federation of Literary and Art Workers,[30] with headquarters in Peking. Tai Ai-lien, a well-known professional dancer, heads the association. She has dedicated herself to the incorporation of folk life, especially that of the minority peoples, into her dances. Her training, however, is Western.

F. Music

• 533 Appreciation of Western classical music has been revived in accordance with the principle of "accepting the culture of the world." The

27. Ibid., March 1954.
28. Ibid., April 1954.
29. Ibid., May 1954.
30. The All-China Federation of Literary and Art Circles was changed to the Federation of Literary and Art Workers in September 1953.

533 municipal symphony orchestra in Peking performs Beethoven as well as Tschaikowsky and such a performance is intended to set an example for musical activities elsewhere in the nation. The quality of the symphony's performance is unknown. No major composer has emerged under the Communist regime. Most of the musicians seem to be absorbed in collecting and re-arranging folk music, in composing scores for new operas, or in turning out at short notice musical accompaniment for propaganda films.

Marching bands have been very popular under the Communist regime; nearly every school has a band. This is in keeping with the Communists' deliberate effort to foster some kind of martial spirit in the youth of the country.

536 of dramatic arts.[57] The remarks of this old actor, with over twenty years of stage experience in Southwest China, point out clearly the direction in which local traditional drama is to be developed.

The non-musical stage-play was quite popular in Southwest China during the War of Resistance against Japan. Possibly because of their political ideas such plays are no longer popular. In January 1953, only one play -- "Confronting New Things and People" -- was advertised in Chungking. New variety shows dealing with short subjects such as "Sing for the Erh-lang Mountain," and "Kill the American Wolf," are performed more often than plays. Many familiar traditional Szechwan operas have been performed, but undoubtedly they have been revised by the Communists. This situation is different from that in North or East China, where the non-musical stage-play continued to hold the interest of the stage as late as 1953.

533 Song and dance are extensively used both on and off the stage. Their versatility as media of information and propaganda has long been recognized by the Communists. As early as 1950, the 700 musicians in Chungking were organized into groups, and by July of that year had already been to 106 factories to teach the workers to sing "new" songs.[58] Music and dance

57. New China Daily, Chungking, January 27, 1953, p. 3.

58. Compendium of Gov't Reports, p.1002.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF 16 SW China AF16

533 numbers arranged to depict a political theme are frequently presented at the cultural centers and by propaganda teams traveling in the countryside. (For more discussion on song and dance, see chapter on Artistic and Literary Expression).

B. Motion Pictures

1. Control

346 So far there has been no indication that any motion picture has been or is being made in Southwest China, except perhaps some newsreels photographed by movie teams attached to the "Liberation Army." Thus the problem of control in this region is reduced simply to that of supervising the distribution and showing of films. More remote from sources of American and other Western motion picture supply, even the question of censorship will automatically be taken care of as soon as distribution is centralized. Early in 1950, the Southwest China branch of the China Motion Picture Distribution Company was in operation. It monopolizes distribution and is directly controlled by its headquarters in Peking.

Responsible for the supervision of the showing of motion pictures in this region are the provincial cultural and education commissions. They are also in charge of organization and the assignment of mobile motion picture teams to tour the countryside.

2. Development

In July 1950, the Southwest China branch

3: Hutson M-5 (no date) 1921 AF16 Southwest China AF16

545 In shadow plays, *têng ying hsi* 燈影戲, the figures are made of leather and the performance is generally held at night. The court-yard of a house is curtained round with white calico; within there is light, without it is dark, and the figures are manipulated so that the shadows fall on the screen for the spectators outside to view.

In the *pei tan* 被單 *hsi* or sheet play the actors screen off a small enclosure with black calico and display a small wooden puppet over the top of it. The puppets are worked by strings attached to legs, arms, tongues, etc. The showmen are trained ventriloquists, and make their puppets dance and kick about in most amusing fashion; the figures are called *shên t'ung-tzŭ* 神童子, because they are so smart and acrobatic, and they are probably procured in the same way as those of the Punch and Judy shows.

There are amateur theatrical companies composed of local actors or farm labourers with a gift for singing or acting, and called *têng pan-tzŭ* 燈班子. Many join such a troupe to have a gay time of running round the countryside; the rustics call these escapades *sao têng* 臊燈. Such companies only get about 5000 cash for a day's performance.

[533] Street singing is termed *pan têng* 板凳 *hsi* (stool concert), or *wan yu hui* 玩友會 (friendly society), or *wei ku* 圍鼓, (round the drum).

The peepshow, *hsi hu* 西湖 *hsi* (west lake show) is a box with glaring pictures outside, and peepholes through which those who pay may look at the pictures inside, these being brought into view in turn by means of a handle.

Performers go from door to door getting a single cash at each for making a puppet dance up and down by the motion of a fan; *shan tzŭ* 扇子 *hsi*.

545 231 Others go from house to house with a monkey, a dog and a box of paraphernalia. Money for a performance having been paid down the performer directs the monkey which opens the box, dresses itself, and rides the dog or drives it hitched to a miniature plough.

Theatricals are given in each parish in front of the *Yang miao* 秧苗 *t'u ti* or local god of sprouting grain, in order to keep insects away from the growing crops.

3: Hutson M-5 (no date) 1921 AF16 Southwest China AF16

782 immortal. This is called *lien tan hsüan kung* 煉丹玄功. The body is said to have ten openings, but the one on the top of the head needs to be opened in this way before it is effectual.

* * *

EXHORTATION 說書 *shuo shu.*

792 To explain the Sacred Edict, 講聖諭 *chiang shêng yü.* The Sacred Edict originally had six chapters composed by the emperor Shun-chih 順治, but it was enlarged and edited by his successor K'ang-hsi, and now contains sixteen chapters. Before the exhorter begins his works a tablet has to be erected on which are engraved the two characters Shêng yü. Candles are lighted on either side and in front, paper and incense are also burned before the tablet; the exhorter then bows three times, and knocks his head nine times to the ground before he begins to talk. The custom is to pay 100 cash for each chapter explained, and three chapters are generally gone over each evening. This money is generally paid by rich people in order to accumulate merit; not uncommonly a rich farmer or wealthy merchant invites an exhorter to his house for this purpose. At its beginning this practice may have been better than it now is; unfortunately the wicked lives of many of these men does much to nullify their words; and their exhortation is no longer confined to the doctrines contained in the Sacred Edict, but is largely made up of old wives' fables, and local and provincial scandals.

Many preachers of the Sacred Edict also use the method of exhortation by proverbs, *chiang kê yen* 講格言. There is a slight resemblance to, and connection with, the Sacred Edict, but most of the incidents are taken from the law courts, or scandals in business and private circles.

533 Men walk through the streets and sing ballads of a national or amorous character, *ch'ang shan shu* 唱善書. The idea is generally to procure travelling expenses for themselves or others to some distant place

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Area or Village by Order of the Appearance of the Meetings		Date (Lunar) Calendar		Number of Priests Engaged
8.	I	15,16,17,	4th Month	3 Priests
9.	J	16,17,18	" "	(T'an Ching only)
9.	K	16,17,18,19,	4th Moon	3 (with Wen God ceremony)
10.	L	21,22,	" "	1
11.	M	About 20,	" "	3
12.	N	22,23,24,	" "	3
12.	O	22,23,	" "	1
13.	H	23,24,25,	" "	5 (with Wen God ceremony)
14.	P	About 25,	" "	1
15.	Q (Prayer and the ceremony of receiving a special goddess)	25,26,27,	" "	3
16.	R	1,2,3	5th Moon	5

(Altogether nineteen meetings are here recorded. See Diagram for the approximate location of each area.)

A complete description of the rites involved in these prayer meetings is impossible in the present paper. The author proposes here to state in outline form only (1) the main points of the rites, (2) the cost of the meetings, and (3) the meaning of the prayers.

1. The Main Points of the Rites

The most important thing is the work of the priests in reading their scriptures, reciting incantations, and burning petitions to the gods. In the smaller one-priest affairs the reading and reciting is done by the priest alone, with the accompaniment of the sound of a "wood fish" or a bell. In the larger three-priest affairs this is done in singing and reciting. The singing is accompanied by cymbals, bugles, and stringed instruments played by three or four accompanists who often join in the priests' chorus. This is done by three or four priests taking turns or together, from about 7:00 in the morning to about 11:00 or 12:00 in the evening, stopping for meals or for a pipe. Petition papers are burned to the various gods at one time or another. The burning of such papers involves many strenuous duck steps made in succession by three priests so that their faces are covered with perspiration. Both the scriptures and the petitions state that the people of the locality have deep sins and know that the gods are now showing their anger, but respectfully and tremblingly request the gods to withdraw the punishment, and that the people promise to obey the superior spirits forever. On the second evening of the prayer meeting the chief priest assumes the dress of a chief monk and sits on a lotus flower-shaped seat fixed on a high platform; while many boys and men hold their immediate ancestors' (usually father or mother) paper tablets and gradually push the latter over a cloth "bridge" towards the chief priest, as the latter performs various rituals. This is the ritual of "sitting the lotus" and is for giving blessing to the souls who have died of sudden illness or accidents (as a matter of fact, mostly deaths due to the epidemic). The third night is signified by a ritual spreading of porridge and paper money to homeless (i.e., descendent-less) spirits who may be about the place, along the

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